My Dear Son

BOOK ONE

Short Stories



N Natarajan

Books by N Natarajan.

(Tamil)

These books are available in Print and ebook form.

(1) My Dear son

(2) Connections

(3) Zen Stories

Written by N Natarajan

Edited by : Subash Viswanathan

(English):

(4) My Dear Son Book 01

Science of good living - Part I

Lessons through short Stories.

(5) My Dear Son Book 02

Science of good living - Part II

Lessons through Short stories.

The following books are geting ready.

(6) Shake hands with Brahma

(Science of Spirituality)

(7) Thedalgal (Seekers) - (Tamil)

(8) OTTanGal (Running) - Shake Hands with the Creator - the Science of Spirituality - Part II (Tamil)

(9) Middle Class. (Tamil)

(10) Poverty ... A spiritual Solution. (Tamil)

My Dear Son - Book 01

Science of Good Living.

Part I

Lessons through Short stories

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Edited by : Viswanathan. Subash

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Introduction

My dear Son,

In the east, it is customary for a father to earn wealth as much as possible, lead a frugal living, and enrich their children's future. Whether they need it or not, people earn and save wealth for the bright future of their generation next.

It is also believed that most valuable of the asset, typically the parents leave for their children, is the stories with which the children lead a good life.

I am presenting here some of the stories that I heard from my father along with a few other stories that I read. They may be relevant to the current times.

Most problems are because of our not being conscious of some basic truths. They are called, in short, knowledge. Men of knowledge explain that, all our problems can be traced to the fact that we live with our wrong knowledge.

Some of our serious problems could be traced to our society which is aping the west mindlessly. That too, selectively even the west does not cherish.

For generations, our grandmas brought-up and supplemented the education of the children with stories of valour, kindness and knowledge.

I am doing just that, so that you and people of your age derive immense benefit from the lesson received by us.

Note: It is possible that, you might have read or heard

some of the stories. It is also possible you might have experienced some of the situations found in the stories or narrations.

The intention of writing this book is not meant for telling just some stories. For all that you might have heard or read some of the stories, from one of the several sources. The objective is to link these stories to certain themes, so that the themes gets into your mind and internalized. Any internalized knowledge will help you in appropriate life situations, through subconscious acts.

Affectionately

N NATARAJAN

Knowledge - a key to good living.

(1) Learn from other's experience:

Learning from one's own experience takes longertime. Learning from other's experience increases the pace of learning. Read the history, short stories, news around the world. Absorb and abstract the knowledge relevant to you and your life situation. I am sure you will discover that it makes your life journey pleasant and enjoyable.

(2) Learn while you are young.

As one grows, the ability to absorb and retain the knowledge decreases. So read and absorb all good things while you are young and able.

You may read in this book a few themes. Each theme has a list of information under the caption, know this. These can be retained in your mind until these are absorbed into our subconscious mind.

Finally, one or more stories relevant to the theme are given. These stories would help remembering the theme. Stories form good message carriers.

I am planning to introduce you to some more themes with short stories, for your benefit, in a few more books I am writing.

They will be titled, My Dear Son, Book 2 and book 3 respectively.

I am sure you will spend some time reading them a few times over and benefit from it.

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Theme : ANGER.

Know this:

(1) Anger is a natural reaction when things do not happen the way it was expected.

(2) It is the expression of helplessness on your part. Shouting and other violent reactions are the typical fallouts.

(3) When you shout at some one, he receives it as a shock for first time. Less affected next time. They anticipate it subsequently.

(4) You may be typically nicknamed - The pressure cooker! or the jumping jack, worry-ental, dynamite, barking dog and one such.

(5) People around you, whose action are the source of your anger would never change their ways.

(6) People in anger cannot think cohesively.

(7) Angry people cannot take the most appropriate decision and action in a difficult situation.

(8) From the time immemorial, wicked people made their opponents get angry, to win over them.

Suggestion:

You have two options to choose from.

First, choose to live with the anger and suffer the consequence. That is what most people do!

Second option: attempt to win over the anger.

Is it possible?

Yes. why not?

The only precondition is that, you should believe

that, you can ! If you choose the second option.

(1) Be conscious of the fact that you get angry and the typical situations that bring anger to you.

(2) When such situation arises, decide not to react in any manner. Here you need to devise a tool to divert your own attention elsewhere. Essentially shift your mind elsewhere. Hum a music that you like or listen to a music or to any favorite activity without others noticing it. I count one to hundred within my mind.

(3) After a few minutes wait, list down ways to combat (action plans to tackle) the present situation. For each such plan write separately the favourable and unfavourable reactions that can be expected.

(4) Choose the best among the options before you. Often you discover that, there is no need to react then and there!

(5) The decision thus made, after you have cooled down completely, will invariably be the best.

(6) You might take a day or longer for the first time.

But very soon you will find yourself that nothing angers you. Your pace of taking action in every tough situation will improve each time.

Note: This advice is based on my own experience. That was when my friends of fourteen long years association, forced themselves into our family - run enterprise that we started. They did everything even a sworn enemy would not imagine. Starting with embezzlement of huge cash, manipulating accounts to swindling the investments, to attempting to transfer the property of the company to one's own name. We, the investors, were made to run to courts, police

stations and ultimately bring down the shutters.

We did not express our anger or anguish to our associates who let us down. We never blamed any one for the problem.

We owned the problem. We accepted that our laxity or failure to run the business professionally, lead to the problem. Went soft on people. Got every thing in place quickly. Cleared every paise we owed and made a honourable exit.

Some stories that follow will help you believe that you can live free of anger.

Theme : ANGER.

Story 01

The Wise Donkey.

A merchant was traveling with his donkey laden with his merchandize.



He had a stick in his hand with which he would cane the beast often. He hurled abuses at the donkey and held it responsible for the ills that he is suffering. This he did it non-stop, all along the way. In addition, he would kick the beast once in a while.

A Sufi saint walked past the donkey and the merchant. He could quickly grasp the situation between the man and the donkey. He thought it fit to give the merchant a slice of his thought.

He drew the attention of the merchant politely and told him that it was unfortunate that the beast was not provided by the god with faculties to understand our language and ways we think.

So there is no use in abusing and torturing the hapless beast. The merchant was not impressed with this advice.

Instead, the Sufi continued, there is something that a man can learn from Donkey. It is worth attempting.

The merchant was shocked to hear this suggestion. “You mean, I learn from this dumb and good for nothing animal”?

The Sufi continued. “True. Learning the art of keeping cool head and composure in front of a donkey, in an adverse situation”.

Hope you noted both the fun and pun in Sufi’s advice. But there is a lot more to it.

Is it that, only donkeys are not equipped with enough faculties to understand humans. Not at all.

Most fellow humans are also do not have enough faculties to understand the world around them. Many

of our fellow men do not understand the instructions and react correctly.

Those who are angered are no better than the merchant to believe that every one around us are intelligent enough to understand.

A mere understanding of this simple truth, will ensure that we will never be angry with any one.

Instead of reacting violently and displaying displeasure through outbursts, understanding this simple truth will benefit us. There by help us devising ways that prevent a future bad situation.

Theme: Very often our judgements are wrong!

Know this:

Our lives moved faster than our ancestors. Your generation moves faster than ours. The change of pace is bound to continue its upward journey until one day there will be greater wars or calamity that would lead to destruction. The pace of life, then might come to a near halt, The upward travel on the cycle of life would start again, afresh.

The increased pace of life is nevertheless exciting. This excitement, is not without its ill effects. Fast pace of life deprives us of the patience necessary to watch, listen and think.

You do it and may be all the generations to come would repeat it unless we are conscious of it.

The following story would amply demonstrate it.

Know this:

(1) Look back into your life. You will besurprised to discover that you remained a good friend to an ill-willed person for long. Some day, years later, you discover an enemy in whom you trusted so long. On the other hand in our usual act of misjudgment you hurt someone who really cared for you and your wellbeing.

(2) One of the important sources of our miseries in our life can be traced to frequent misjudgment of people and events around you - their abilities, their worth, their nature and finally their intentions.

(3) We end up deciding in a hurry, only to repent such decisions at leisure.

(4) Most of Our judgments are based on our limited knowledge. So it is often flawed. Alternately, very rarely, our judgments are correct.

(5) In this process, we hurt others and eventually hurt ourselves.

Suggestions:

Exercise Caution in judging others:

Defer an action, based on your judgement alone, as long as possible.

I will tell you a few stories, depicting different life situations where we grossly misjudge people around us.

Theme : Wrong judgments

Short story 02

GUILT

This story is adopted from a Taoist Tale from China.

This story belongs to a time when humanity existed in the midst of nature. The dry wood was the source of fuel that mankind needed.

Professional wood cutters went into the forests, cut dry wood from the trees and sold to others in the community.

Every house had a store-room for wood. Almost every male member was a wood cutter. Women did the job in the absence of men. Like software professionals of today, wood cutters were in great demand.

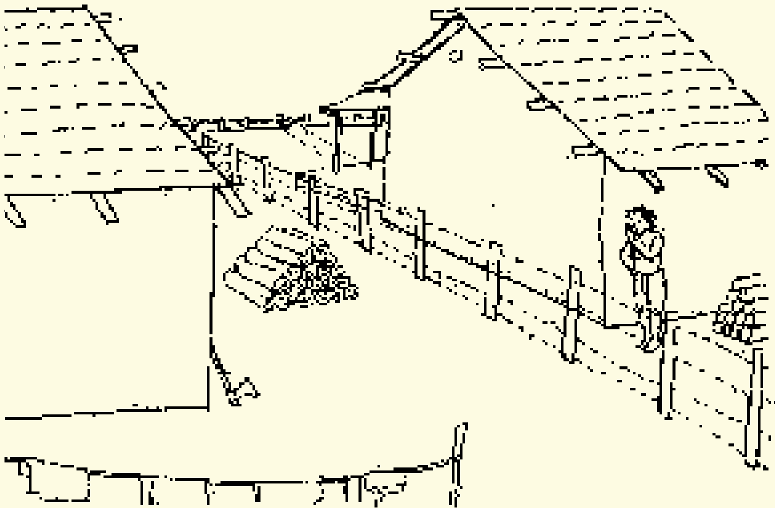
Let us see a story in a typical house where there would be no space between houses. A simple wooden

fence marked the boundaries.

Every backyard had a hay stack and cattle. In addition, a shed where the cut and uncut wood are stored, as it is the vital source of energy for people of that time.

One fine morning, the owner of the 'house A' went to his backyard to cut some wood for his family.

He went straight to his shed where the uncut wood was stored.



He discovered that his favorite axe was missing. He couldn't find it in the place where he normally kept.

Then he casually looked around and noticed that his neighbor's son was standing near the woodshed in his house.

It should be a curse on the humanity that everyone quarrels with their neighbors. Jesus advised people to be friendly with neighbors. The situation has not

changed even after 2000 years !

As with any other household, the relationship of people of 'house A', was not cordial with their neighbor. They had quarreled on some petty issues in the past.

It was easy for him to suspect that boy next door must have stolen his axe, as an act of revenge. He felt that the boy was watching him from his backyard and enjoying himself of his plight.

He went inside his house and picked-up his spare axe and completed the day's task. The days rolled-by.

A few days later, the woodcutter was surprised and happy to come upon the axe under a pile of firewood.

"I remember now," he said to himself, "this is where I left it !"

The next time he saw his neighbor's son, at his back yard, he noticed that the boy had lost his guilty looks.

It is our misjudgement we see guilt everywhere except in us.

Let us read another story from modern times!

I have heard of several versions of this story in different situations. The common aspect among all is the misjudgement.

Theme: Wrong judgments

Short Story 03

Indecent Fellow passenger.

Ragav is a marketing person based in Bangalore. He commutes to nearby towns by train in air-conditioned class, on every business day.



Some times, the engagements with clients will take so long that he would miss his lunch.

Today was one such day. Ragav, hungry and tired ,

returned to Railway Station to board his train back to Bangalore. He hardly had any time to eat as the

train was entering the platform. He picked up some cookies, a couple of magazines before he boarded the train.

It was a two-hour journey. The compartment was filled with passengers.

He kept the plastic bag containing the cookies near his feet along with his laptop and briefcase. He started reading the magazine.. From time to time he would reach out to his bag to pick a cookie.

Suddenly he realised, another hand also accessing the same bag. He immediately looked at the person sitting next to him. He withdrew his hand and smiled at Ragav. The person looked affluent and well fed.

Should he be stealing a cookie from his bag! He wondered! This repeated a couple of times.

He could not read the magazine but pretended to read. His attention was on the passenger seated next to him. He was watching him. There was the last cookie in the bag. He waited to see if that indecent guy next to him repeats the act of stealing from his bag.

After a long wait, he decided to pick that last piece. The other guy also must have waited. Coincidently, both of them attempted to pick the cookie at the same time. Ragav was furious. He even murmured,

"there are thieves even amongst upper class travellers ".

The indecent guy must have heard, but yet he smiled.

The two-hour journey came to an end. As the train pulled into the station, every passenger got up from

his seat and picked his luggage.

Ragav also picked his. To his surprise, he discovered that his third bag, the plastic bag containing cookies was there, infact, untouched.

Theme: Our defective judgments

Short Story 4

The wayfarer.

The story belong to a date, when the Indian subcontinent consisted of several small countries and were ruled by the kings.

The bullock carts were the most expensive transport and only rich merchants and government officials could afford them.

Common people and small traders walked along the roads laid and maintained by the kings.

Trees were planted along the road so that the pedestrians can rest under them when they grew tired. Some take food that they carry with them, under the sprawling trees and sleep for a while before they continue their journey.

There was a lone traveler among several others walking along the road. He was proud that he knows every thing in the world.

After traveling for a long time, he decided to take the lunch that he brought along. When he had finished his lunch he felt sleepy and lay down under the shade of that tamarind tree.

As he lay down under the tree he looked-up and saw a bunch of small tamarind fruits hanging from the branches. He thought for a while and wondered that

the nature is stupid that it produced small fruits and berries on large trees and large vegetables such as pumpkin on slender creepers. With these thoughts he slept off.

After a while, wind blew and the riped fruits from the tree fell down right on the head of the traveler. Since it fell from a height, it hurt him very bad and he woke up then.



Then came the thought.

If pumpkin or similar large fruit grew on such sprawling tree, no one can ever rest under the tree. If they did, their head would be smashed some time.

Since creepers do not provide shade no one stay under it. So the people are safe.

The nature, he realized, knew what to grow and where. Our judgments are based on very limited exposure and incomplete knowledge.

Theme: Fight to finish

Know this:

(1) Most of our pursuits come to an end with very little resistance.

(2) Those who succeed brave the failures, overcome obstacles in their path, go through the resistance from every source successfully.

(3) This is possible only for people with a positive mind set.

(4) Several research projects were discontinued only when a few steps were left before it could have given results. Some more efforts, some additional investments would have marked the success.

(5) The Tamil Saint Thiruvalluvar advises as follows. Before you set off on your pursuits, think well. When once started, stopping or rethinking is wrong.

(7) Some of us change the directions and goals half way through a chosen pursuits. We engage ourselves in multitudes of tasks and reach nowhere.

To this, a Zen Guru observes, one who chases two rabbits gets none. Suggestion:

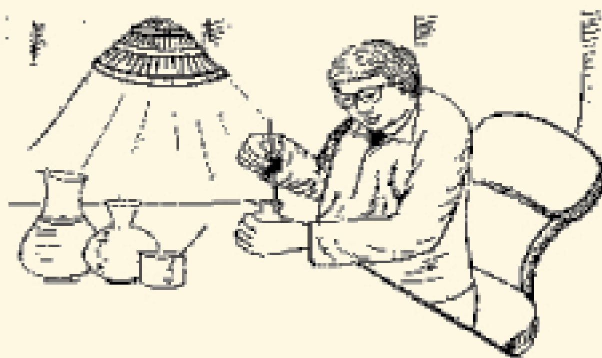
(1) Stay focussed till you succeed in your mission. Two stories are attributed to Edison, first one to his perseverance and second that demonstrates that he could see advantages even in adverse situations.

Theme: Fight to finish

Short story : 05

Edison's light bulb.

Today, in Electrical bulbs, there are several hundreds of variations, technologies, and efficiencies to choose from. A path breaking beginning was made by Edison.



It was not easy for Edison, then. It is said he tried out with 2000 and odd elements in his experiments to make an electric bulb to work. His impatient assistant discouraged him suggesting that the project be dropped as a lot of money and effort has gone waste.

To this, Edison's reaction was something unusual. He convinced his assistant that nothing was ever wasted. Out of our efforts and investment we learnt that two thousands elements are unsuitable for making an electric bulb.

The perseverance of Edison led to his discovery of his first working electric bulb which had carbon filament.

Subsequent decades employed Edison's discovery. Tungsten replaced carbon filament in the electric bulbs. From that evolved other technologies which lights our world.

Theme : POSITIVE ATTITUDES

Selfless act arise out of Positive thinking.

Know this:

(1) It always helps wearing positive attitudes.

(2) The men of knowledge found that our life today is the result of our attitudes and several choices that we made with those attitudes in the past.

(3) To wear a positive attitude, we should make the positive attitude, as our nature.

One's nature:

You might have heard people saying that it is his nature! That refers to the attitude of a parson.

Everyone's attitude is made up of several small and big experiences in the past. Lessons are drawn and stored in our mind. Some messages received from people whom we trust, also adds up, to it.

Slowly, this knowledge in the conscious mind trickles down to our subconscious mind. It is here most of our actions are determined without our conscious decision making process.

Those who possess negative mind set, typically must have had several failures in early life.

One or more bad experience in the past when acted with a positive mind set adds up to this. Cultural

prejudices, wrong knowledge are other factors which cultivate a negative mind set.

Self confidence, strong mind, courage, fewer failures on acting with positive mindset helps one act into life with a positive mind set.

There is no substitute to personally experiencing the benefits of living with positive attitudes.

Theme: Act of Giving, a positive attitude!

You would discover that there is an immeasurable pleasure in Giving !

You need not have to own immense wealth to give others happiness. In most situations, You may own just nothing !. Still you can give others immense happiness. It is a matter of attitude, a positive attitude!

It is possible that a meagre 2-5% of the worlds population

(1) is assured of timely food,

(2) have a shelter and clothing to protecting themselves, almost throughout their life time.

Yet, most of us are never satisfied with what we have. We rave for more. Yet, happy receiving gifts from others. Many of us crib whenever a situation

calls for Giving! Be it a tax or a fee.

There are the vast majority who are not sure from where their next time food would come from. They are the victims of nature’s fury, round the year, world over.

In such a scenario, the affluent who are affluent can think in two ways.

The first way is, to think that there are so many in the world who need help. Let me do whatever little possible by me, all the time, to poor and needy around. Thereby, see an immense opportunity to render help to someone less privileged than us. Thank God for providing us with the resources and opportunity to help others in need. Calls for Giving!

Be it a tax or a fee. There are a vast majority who are not sure from where their next time food would come from. They are the victims of nature's fury, round the year, the world over.

In such a scenario, people who are affluent can think in two ways.

The first way is to think that there are so many in the world who need help. Let me do whatever little possible by me, all the time, to poor and needy around.



There by, see an immense opportunity to render help to someone, less privileged than us. Thank the god for providing us with the resources and opportunity to help others in need.

Second way is to think that it was gigantic task ahead. Vast majority needs help and therefore it is impossible to catering to it with our limited resources. Therefore do nothing about it.



If you could quench the hunger of one poor person only, that too once in a month, it would bring you the happiness that will surpass the pleasure of possession of a million rupees worth !.

One would discover in the process that there is joy in helping others and in general, the tremendous Joy in giving. Ask anyone who have the habit of giving. They would share with you the joy they had.

Helping others – giving – is a positive attitude. Let us wear a positive attitude and put our compassion to real work. Advice: Develop the Attitude of giving – your efforts, your material, your attention may be merely your love and care.

Theme: Facing adverse situation.

Opportunities lay hidden even in adverse situations. We can reconize them when we wear a positive attitude towards life.

Knowledge:

(1) Adverse situations are common occurrences in every one's life.

(2) Most of us run away from it.

(3) Every adverse situation for us as an opportunity for some others.

(4) It has been proved by some people that any adverse situation can be turned into an opportunity, provided we have a positive mind set.

Suggestions:

(1) Read and remember the stories given below.

(2) When faced with adverse situation, people with positive mind, Instead of becoming panicky finds ways of using it in their favour.

(3) Read Thomas Edison and modern America; By Theresa Mary Collins, to get an exciting account of researchers and their times.

The three stories below gives adverse situations in three distinct life situations.

Theme: Facing adverse situation.

This is a very important theme. Therefore, we will have two stories

Short Story 06

Edison's Factory goes ablaze.

Once Edison's factory was on fire. He called in his wife to witness the glorious event. He points out that a great opportunity to rebuild the factory is made possible by the accident.

He reasoned that, during the growth of their enterprise the factory expanded without a plan or an order. Now they have an opportunity to rebuild it.

We, the ordinary people, will lose our mind with a fire accident where-in our entire investment evaporate in fire.

Real achievers see an opportunity even in a disaster.

Said in another way, successful people turn every adverse situation into an opportunity to grow. Next two stories will amply demonstrate how adverse situations can become opportunities.

Theme: Facing adverse situation.

Short Story 07

Water carrier

This story is told in India and dates back to the time when potable water was not supplied through water pipe lines, directly to houses.

People bring water from far away places. Affluent ones engage people to fetch them water from such sources.

The water carriers carry on their shoulders a pole with water pots tied at either ends of a long pole..

One of the water carriers carried water for his master for a long time. One of the two pots developed a crack. He had no money to replace the cracked pot.



Even though the man filled both the pots equally, by the time he reaches his master's house, he will have

only one and a half pots water.

Because of this, he had to make extra trip to the water source that would cause him additional effort and resulting pain.

The water carrier thought to himself, that nothing could go waste, in nature. He thought of an idea and started implementing it earnestly.

He planted seeds of flower plants on either side of the path from the water source up to his master's house. As he brought the water from the tank, he walked on one side of the path on alternate trips. The leaking water helped the plants to grow. Very soon, they started yielding lovely flowers. He sold these flowers to his masters and others nearby.

Soon he became a gardener and then rich.

Theme: Pick the right lesson.

To do so, tt calls for a positive attitude

Know this:

(1) Every experience offers two lessons. One positive and the other negative.

(2) One's success and well being in life or otherwise depends on what he picks. The right lesson or the wrong ones.

(3) Picking right lesson needs one wear a positive attitude.

Theme: Pick the right lesson.

Short Story 08

The hunter and the hunted !

Very long ago, a fox lived in the deep forest. It lost its front legs, in an accidental jump. So it could not run. It moved about slowly and limping.

A hunter lived on the edge of the forest observed the fox one day. He was surprised and kept watching its movements, for a long time. He was wondering, how the fox managed to hunt for living when it could barely move.



One day, he saw a tiger approaching. Hunter climbed the nearby tree and observed its movement. As it came nearer he observed the tiger had in its claws, a deer and the tiger reached a spot where the lame fox was resting.

Tiger laid down the dead deer on the ground. Ate a part of it, left the remaining for the fox to eat and

left the place.

The hunter observed the repetition of this event, very often.

It came to his mind the stories his grandma told him about the GOD. He recollected his Grandma telling him that the God is the greatest provider of food and essentials for every life forms.

He could see that the GOD sent provisions to the lame fox through the tiger. He thanked his grandma, the tiger and the fox for making him realize the GOD! hunter began to think. “If this fox is taken care of in this mysterious way, its food sent by some unseen Higher Power, through a tiger why don’t

I just rest in a corner and have my daily meal provided for me?”

Because he had a lot of faith, he let the days pass, waiting for food sent by GOD.

Nothing happened on the first day. He waited for the second day. His faith did not diminish yet.

He started losing weight and strength until he was nearly a skeleton.

Close to losing consciousness, he heard a Voice which said: “O you, who have mistaken the way, see now the Truth! You should have followed the example of that tiger instead of imitating the disabled fox.”

Though late, the hunter realized his folly of following the fox instead of Tiger. Did you ?

Theme: Help others around you.

Knowledge:

(1) Majority of the world's population lives in poverty, poor health conditions and unhealthy environment. They are the victims of nature's fury round the year.

(2) Most people are poor because they are not compensated for their effort equitably.

(3) Economists said long ago that 80% of a nation's health is enjoyed by a mere 20% of the people.

Appear to be a very old statistics. It should read as, 95% of world wealth is enjoyed by 5% of the people.

(3) Most of us live in an illusionary world where everything is alright.

(4) Majority of the population do not get even two

time food.

(5)We have inherited the art of taking from others and not giving.

(6) Do not realize the immense pleasure in giving.

(7) Most of the affluent suffer from financial insecurity. Save so much of money that even several generations cannot use them up.

(8) Saving fortunes for next generation, make the next generation weak.

(9) The ideal wealth one can give to next generation

is knowledge and skills to earn their needs honestly, ability to have a healthy body and mind.

(10) Art of giving dispels the fear of economic insecurity.

(11) Every religion advocates distribution of wealth among have-nots. Every man of knowledge advocates Giving away to poor and needy,

(12) Reservation of a seat in heaven is often linked

to the extent of wealth you share with poor people around you.

Suggestion:

(1) Do not wait until you change the order of society to change the status of the poor. If at all, it would happen some day, much later.

(2) Do not wait until you have enough resources to feed every poor.

(3) If you can help someone in hunger with one square meal, once a week do it. Do it today.

(4) There is no dearth of good hearts among us. Many contribute to bringing up orphaned children, pld age home, street children run by NGOs. Some act individually and collectively search for the poorest of poor and most needy person in the society. Become a part of it.

Theme: Help others around you.

A long story 9

Help the needy -A Tale of Iran

There are natural people.

That is those who are not very much different from animals. Because both natural people and animals in the wild do not own anything. They cannot work today and eat for several days.

The country of origin of this story is, the present day Iran and the chief character is a wood cutter, a widower.



Whatever he earns will be just sufficient for a day's simple meal for him and his daughter..

One day, his daughter, expressed her desire to have food that only riches can afford. Her father explained

that it calls for extra money. Extra money means extra hours of work. So, to fulfill his daughter's desire, he started working from early morning to very late into the night.

The first day, when he returned from the , it was too late . His daughter latched the door from inside and slept.

He tried to wake-up her up but in vain. This continued for 2 / 3 days.

For the next three days he ended-up sleeping just outside his house and left for the forest early next morning before his daughter wokeup.

On the fourth day he was terribly hungry. As it happened in the three previous nights, the door was latched from inside without response for his knock. The woodcutter sank to the doorstep and wept. At that moment some one touching his shoulder, asked 'what went wrong with him'.

The wood-cutter, looked up to find that it was a pious old person. He explained him his plight and said he did not eat for the last three days and was sleeping at the door steps.

On hearing this story, the pious person offered him raisins and dates, (which are considered as rich food) that he was carrying along with him.

Both ate. The wood-cutter was saved from the agony of hunger. The pious man reminded the wood-cutter that day was a Friday and a holy day. A day when you pray the God, who remove difficulties of people who pray him. The pious man advised the wood-cutter to look for someone who need a help and share with them what you have. Make it a point to tell him our story, the way you were helped. Let this

act of helping the needy on the eve of Friday, spread. Saying so, the pious man vanished into the thin air. The daughter opened the door. Father explained his daughter what happened on three nights.

With the money they accumulated both daughter and father ate and enjoyed different foods for a few more days. The days passed.

One day, the princess of that country passing by in a horse drawn carriage spotted the wood-cutter's daughter and offered her a job of her personal attendant. This brought daughter and father great fortune.

Woodcutter no longer goes to forest for his livelihood.

He forgot the pious man and his advice.

One day, the princess went to spend a day at the private park belonging to the king, accompanied by her personal assistant. There, before swimming, the princess removed her necklace and placed it on in a nearby bush. After bathing the princess forgot to take back the necklace and when she realized it is missing, blamed her personal assistant for it.

The wood-cutter's daughter was hurt and returned home crying. Soon her father was arrested by kings' men and public hurled insults on him.

That was a Friday. The woodcutter, remembered. He also remembered the pious man who helped him when he suffered from extreme hunger. I never bothered to keep-up my word to the pious man, he thought. I was an ungrateful person. He cried for god's mercy.

Suddenly from nowhere appeared a packet of raisins

and a poor and young boy was approaching him.

He offered the raisins he then received, to the poor boy and offered to tell his story as how he had been helped. He requested him to offer any one on Friday and help them telling the story as how he was helped.

The boy thanked the wood-cutter and went a few yards only to be stopped by a rich merchant who was searching for his missing son. The boy and his parents had a happy reunion.

Such a chain continues.

Saturday morning, the princess started on a second picnic to the same spot where she lost her necklace.

After swimming in the lake, when she returned she found her necklace shining in the bush. She realized, after all woodcutter's daughter did not take it at all.

The royal message couriers carried the good news that the lost necklace was found. The wood-cutter was freed and his daughter reinstated. The story ended happily.

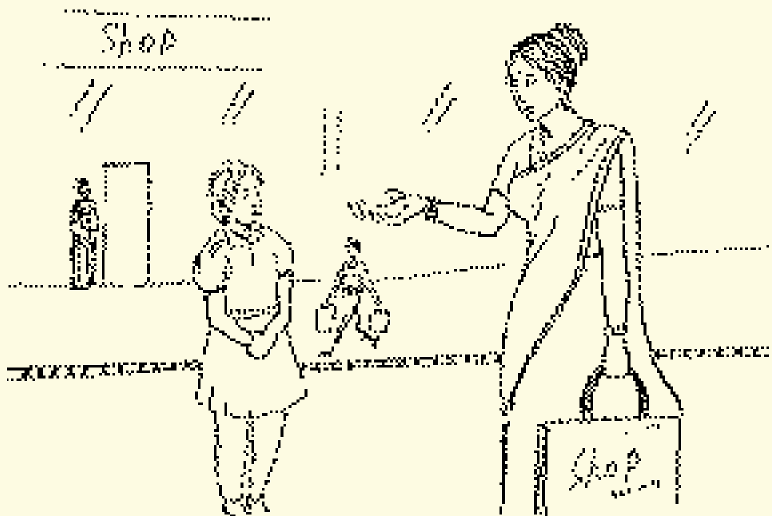
From then on, on every Friday the woodcutter made it a point to find someone in need, share what he had, and tell his tale of God who eliminated the difficulties of people who prayed him.

The Story suggests, not a mere help to others, but to establish a help-chain!

Theme: Art of helping

Short Story 10

VEDA BECOMES AN ANGEL



You can become a God, yourself.

Veda, a kind hearted woman, reached that small town along with her husband and children, upon her husband's transfer.

She was busy organising the new house that was provided to them. She was busy going to the small market place, near her home, to buy things needed for the new home.

On her way to market, she needs to cross a public park and she was looking all around new people

and new faces. Suddenly, her attention was drawn to a poor girl seated on the path close to the park.

She was wondering why this little girl was sitting on the pavement while the children on her age mingled with other children and were playing merrily in the park.

The girl, with her eyes filled with sadness, sat watching the passers-by. Veda, went near the girl, stood close to the girl. Then she observed that the girl had a hunch-back. She could quickly understand as to why the girl is not playing with the fellow children. She enquired the girl, her name and slowly befriended her. She also understood that the girl is poor and has physical deformity. She, added that, she had no friends for the same reason.

Veda, talked to the girl softly. Brought some delicious food from the nearby restaurant which both enjoyed. Veda took leave of the girl for that day and met her time and again. She described the girl as pretty, assured the poor girl that she is the one closer to god. The girl was cheerful for the first time in her life. She said so. In the next few days that followed, Veda made it a point to buy small gifts which made the girl cheerful.

All of a sudden, the poor girl was not spotted on the pavements near the park. She searched all around, whenever she went to market. Finally, she asked some shop-keepers and people who might have seen her with that little girl, only to hear that they never saw any poor girl around, especially with a hunch-back.

Suddenly, to her surprise, the poor girl appeared before her. Slowly the poor girl turned into a beautiful angel. Veda could not believe her eyes and thought that she was perhaps dreaming.

The angel spoke. "No one else, other than you saw

me and Only people who are kind at heart can see an angel".

By your good heart towards poor and needy you could see me. You can become an angel yourself by showing genuine care and true love to needy.

Theme : Selfless actions

Short Story 11:

The Man and Mango.



A story is told of a very old peasant who was planting a sapling of a mango plant.

The kings, invariably had the routine of going around

their kingdom, incognito, dressed like a common man and mingled with his subjects. The idea is to have a first hand knowledge of his subjects and their problems. To check if his ministers and officials discharged their duties properly.

A king was passing by a remote village where an old peasant was seen busy planting a mango sapling.

He looked at the peasant and asked his age. Peasant replied that he was somewhere in his eighties.

The king then demanded to know as how many years would it take for the plant to grow and yield fruits. The peasant replied that , say, forty more years! The king asked if the peasant would be alive then.

The peasant replied in negative. But, he continued, "Dear Youngman, today we are enjoying the fruits, or in short, the efforts of people who do not live any longer. The roads, the trees you see today, we won't know who created it. But we use it merrily.

It is not absolutely necessary that we should work or produce that would be useful only for our own needs or consumption.

The king was pleasantly surprised with the old man's attitude. He immediately pulled-out a golden necklace and presented it to the peasant. The peasant was taken aback from the gestures of the strange young man and quipped,

"It took nearly forty years for getting the reward for planting and caring a tree. I am now in such a country that I get rewarded for a work even before I completed it".

Theme: Perform, sincerely, always !

It is a matter of positive attitude.

Know this:

(1) Most of our actions are performed in a distracted way.

(2) We react instead of acting.

(3) The worst of all is that, we perform always less than the best, that we are really capable of.

(4) Often, life offer no features to correct the past mistakes.

(5) If we have a positive mind set, certainly we would perform our best, every time.

Theme: Perform, sincerely, always !

Short Story 12

The Jakku's last assignment

This story is about a mason called Jakku. He was old. One day he decided to quit the professional life. There is an end for everything in life. So thought the old mason, he would stop working.

The old mason conveyed his master, a building contractor, of his plan to quit construction work.

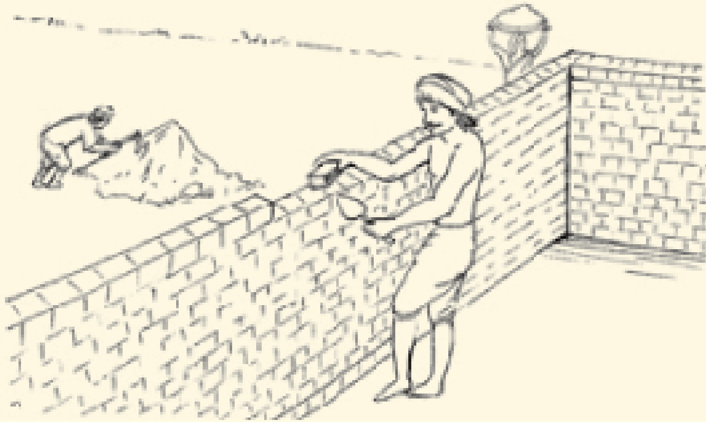
He thanked his master for the generous pay that he gave him throughout his career. The contractor was sorry to learn that a dependable, good artisan was not part of his team any more.

The contractor asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. Jack reluctantly agreed even though he did not want to.

The result was a shoddy workmanship, poor quality of the material he used.

The quality of his work was the reflection of his mind that he was uninterested in the work. He knew that it was a bad to end his good career.

When the mason finished his work the builder came to inspect the house.



The master cum contractor handed the front-door key to the carpenter. “This is your house,” he said, ”It is my gift to your sincerity, honesty and good work done for several decades.”

What a shock! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home he had built notso well.

So it is with us.

Imagine yourself in the place of the mason in the story. Remember that every house you build is yours. Even if you live for only one day more, that last day deserves to be lived equally graciously.

Theme: Avoid a fool's company.

Know this:

(1)It is possible to find more fools than knowledgeable people in the society.

(2) Knowledgeable people cannot be easily cheated.

(3) Fools can be exploited and enslaved.

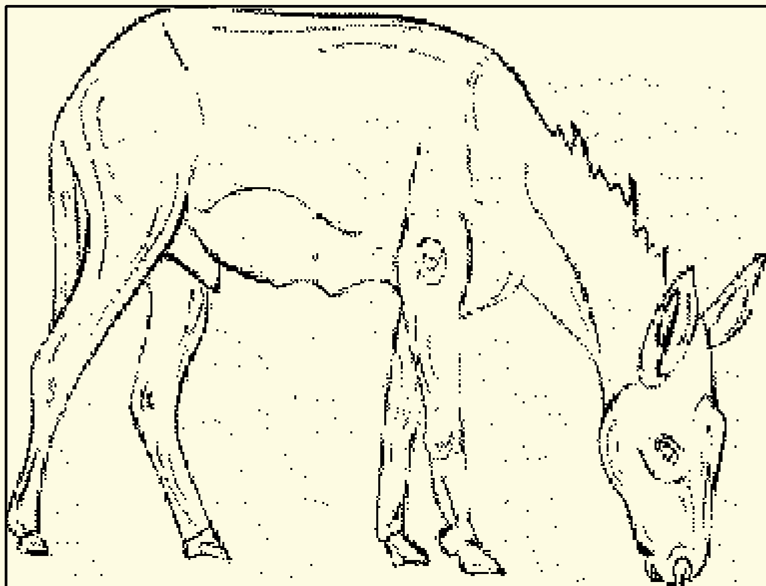
(4) We may feel safer in the company of fools than people with knowledge.

(5) But yet, it is dangerous to associate with fools.

Theme: Avoid a fool's company.

Short story 13

The Fox in the town



In the forest there was a fox, which had an eagle as a friend. The Eagle flew over long distances and return to the forest. The eagle would tell the fox every interesting events inside and outside the forest.

One day the eagle visited a nearby town. It found people growing fruits and vegetables in their farms spread all around the town. These were large and healthy. Such fruits and vegetables are very rare in the forest.

The eagle added that, there were no wild animals in the town to fear for. There are people and animals who are lazy and weak.

The fox was convinced that the life in the city must be great. So, one night, it took leave of its friends and set on its journey to a nearby town.

It was dark when it reached the nearby town. Walked around the towns major roads and spotted lone donkey busy eating from the junk strewn along the road side. There was no one else on the town roads at that time of the night.

The donkey had a miserable life, like any other Donkeys it knew of. It always tried and failed to understand, why the masters of cows, bulls and horses took extensive care of their four-legged companions while the masters of donkeys did not.

The only exception is Donkeys. Their masters made them work hard. Never cared to provide them any food. They even did not display their affection towards them which the masters of cows, bulls and horses often did.

The donkey was sure, as a specie, the donkeys are very sincere to their masters. The only freedom

their creed got was that it was let free at night to find their food so that it can be back in the morning to resume the work for their masters.

The fox was new to town and it was afraid to venture into the farms alone. It was looking for a safe companion to explore and enjoy the rich fruits and vegetables grown there.

The fox approached the donkey that was busy eating and introduced itself. The donkey put forth several questions to the new comer to the town to ascertain if it was safe to move with it.

The same way, with the discussions it had with the donkey the fox understood that the donkey was no cleverer than itself and it is safe to befriend it.

Fox shared all it learnt from his friend eagle about the town and the farms around. It wondered why the donkey choose to eat junk while good vegetables and fruits are grown in the outskirts.

When the donkey learnt about the farms around the town, it initially refused to believe. Then both fox and donkey reached a farm after a long walk.

Together they ate fresh vegetables and fruits and were jubilant that they never enjoyed such a sumptuous food in their lives.

It was early morning and the both of them decided to part their ways only to meet again in the midnight.

Fox went into a hiding where as the donkey headed towards its master's home.

Several days passed and the friends went after farm after farm. The farmers who had peaceful sleep all along found their farms are looted and ruined by some unknown people. They did not suspect that a

donkey-fox pair could be the cause of their misery.

The farmers set up teams to keep a watch in the farms by turns so as to catch the thieves and thrash them.

Day by day the donkey grew fatter and happier.

It became more confident that it can continue to enjoy such a free feast for ever.

One night the fox was very happy and started singing in its coarse voice and aloud. The fox became troubled. It persuaded the donkey not to make noise. If it continued, the fox warned, it would alert the farmers to find them.

The Donkey was annoyed at the fox for its observations. It mocked at the fox saying that it is unfit to live in cities. It added that forest animals

were cowards. The fox had its own problem. It needed a company for its night-outs. It persuaded the donkey to stop braying.

It was minutes before they would have left the farm, a dozen men with sticks descended on the farm. They found the fox and donkey among the fruits and vegetables pulled out of the plants.

They cornered both the animals and smashed thrashed them thoroughly till they became unconscious.

The farmers thought that both were dead and left the place. Farmers were happy that they can have their night's sleep in peace and their farms will be free of pilferage and ruin.

After a few hours both the animals regained their consciousness. They found their bones broken all over their body. It slowly moved out of the farm

before the dawn. It took several months before they got well.

The donkey soon after it got well went back to its master. It decided to live on the food that it was used to ever since its birth and not to indulge in thieving. The fox returned to forest with vow not to befriend fools.

Theme: Do not depend on LUCK

Know this:

(1) There is nothing called a luck.

(2) The chance and luck are not one and the same.

(3) Our sincere effort with a positive mind set, we can succeed.

Suggestions:

(1) Do not blame FATE, ill luck for our failures.

Theme: Do not depend on LUCK

Short Story 14

What is LUCK?

Mulla Nasrudin is a Sufi saint. What made him distinct from other saints was his humour.

All men of knowledge have their own unique way to educate and rein-in peace and happiness in people around them. Typically, Sufi saints are known to use Music to express their thoughts to others.

One day, his disciples sought his explanation of the much talked about Luck, Fate. and Destiny.

These are mere Assumptions, replied Mulla Nasrudin.

The followers sought his explanation.

Mulla Nasrudin replied:

When you assume that a certain event is likely to go well, and if it don’t - that you call it bad luck or

ill-luck.

On the contrary, when one assume that certain events would go badly and if they don’t - that you call it luck.

The assumptions are based on intuition or an idea based on insufficient information or Data and often a wishful-thought.

So there is every chance that it can be wrong.

With wrong assumptions, insufficient data you enter an act. If it fails you call it ill-fate and bad destiny.

Theme: Tire before you retire!

Know this:

(1) We are born only to be on the run. Not to behave as an inanimate object.

(2) If one has sufficient resources, it does not mean you should not play an active role into the world.

Theme: Tire before you retire!

Short Story 15

Tire before retire



Such moral stories as this, have a lot of message. Let us take just one out of it.

The story goes as follows:

The back drop of this story is a large scenic lake in a village with several trees all along the bund. It was a summer. One can imagine several people enjoying a nice sleep under the trees in the shades provided by the trees.

We the city folk, used to sleeping only inside four walls can never even imagine the pleasures these simple and poor villages enjoy.

The village has a large lake spread over a couple of kilometers in every direction. There were several sprawling trees all around the lake.

It was midday then. The heat from the sun was scorching. Peasants had no work to do during the noon. They sought refuge under the shades of a tree. Cowherds and shepherds left the cattle to gaze and took shelter under the shade of a tree.

There were others who enjoyed the wonderful breeze under the trees and sleeping peacefully.

An elderly person reached the lake and moved from tree to tree looking for a particular person among those who slept there.

A little back ground information to this story is necessary.

An young man was a distant relative of elderly persson. While he himself was known to be a well educated person while the parents of the youngster, were not.

The parents of the young man felt that their son did not pursue a job and life which any normal youth of his age and time did. He spent all his time in fun and leisure. The parents commissioned their learned relative to bring some sense into their son.

The story continues.

After a long search the learned man identified the Young man he was looking for and called him out gently.

It took a few minutes, for the young man who was deeply asleep, to wake-up. It was obvious that he did not like his being disturbed from his sleep. At the same time he had some respect for his visitor. He sat-up and greeted the visitor.

The visitor spent a little while in talking about himself and enquired about the lad.

After a brief silence, he advised the lad seek an employment somewhere.

The lad was quite cool. He nodded in affirmative.

The visitor was pleased.

The lad, his parents observed, was quite abnormal in his behavior. He was detached from his family and was freely wandering like any madman or god man would. The elderly person is a distant relative of this lad and respected by everyone in the family.

He was happy that his job was almost done. The lad questioned the visitor, as what he should do after he is employed.

The visitor became enthusiastic. The lad replied the visitor that he would get married to a girl identified by the visitor's choice. and live happily.

The visitor was happy that his job was almost done. The lad questioned the visitor, as what he should do, next.

The visitor replied that he would have children.

“After having children, what should he do”, demanded the lad.

Care them, bring them up, educate them, get them employed and married. Then they will have children and so on.

The lad continued. My children would take care of their children as I would be taking care of my children. “What is next for me?”.

The visitor concluded,” then, you can relax”.

The lad laughed and retorted to the visitor that he is already doing that.

He asked the visitor, if he was sure that the ultimate act in the entire exercise is to relax. He then continued, “ I am already doing it”. “Why should he go through several steps at all?”

The visitor was dumbfounded and left the place as a disappointed person.

Is the argument of the lad right? If not what is wrong? Discuss this story

Theme: No one is superior to any other person, (all the time and in every situation).

(1) Every one is superior to others some time, in some situations.

(2) No profession is superior to another.

(3) It is our foolishness to link one's superiority with education, social position and possessions.

Two stories to highlight this theme follows.

Theme: No one is superior to any other.

STORY 16

The Boatman And The Teacher

The story is based on a Persian tale. It is possible the reader could have heard or read this, several times over. But it is worth reading it once more to link the story with a very useful message.

There are several stories with the same theme in other parts of the world. This suggests that people existed everywhere and all the time with arrogance and false pride.

Society in the east, consider teaching as the most respected among professions, next only to peasantry which produces food for every one in the society. Here goes the story.

A newly appointed teacher comes to a village located on a riverside, for living. He commutes to a village on the other side of the river every day.

He needs to take the boat service every day.

The hero in this story, is the boatman.

The unlettered boatman invited the teacher and offered him a free ride to the other bank of the river where the teacher worked.

The teacher, having accepted the courtesy shown by the boatman started a conversation. “What kind of weather will we have today?”

The boatman checked the direction of the wind, looked up at the sun, wrinkled his brow, and replied, “ we is going to have a storm.”

Horrified by this reply, the teacher made a face and said critically, “ you should not say ‘we is’ but say ‘we are’. Didn’t you ever learn grammar?”

The illiterate boatman responded to this reprimand with nothing but a shrug of his shoulders. “How do I know grammar?” he asked.

The teacher was at his wits’ end. “You don’t know river !”

Just as the boatman had predicted, dark clouds developed on the horizon, a strong wind whipped the waves, and the boat tossed about in the rough sea.

In no time there was lots of water in the boat and the boatman asked the teacher, “Have you ever learned to swim?”

The teacher replied in negative. “No. I did not learn to swim” .

Grinning from ear to ear, the boatman replied,

“Well, in that case your whole life is down the river because our boat is going to sink any minute now!”

The teacher did not live long enough to understand, that the grammar that he knew would not have helped him to survive.

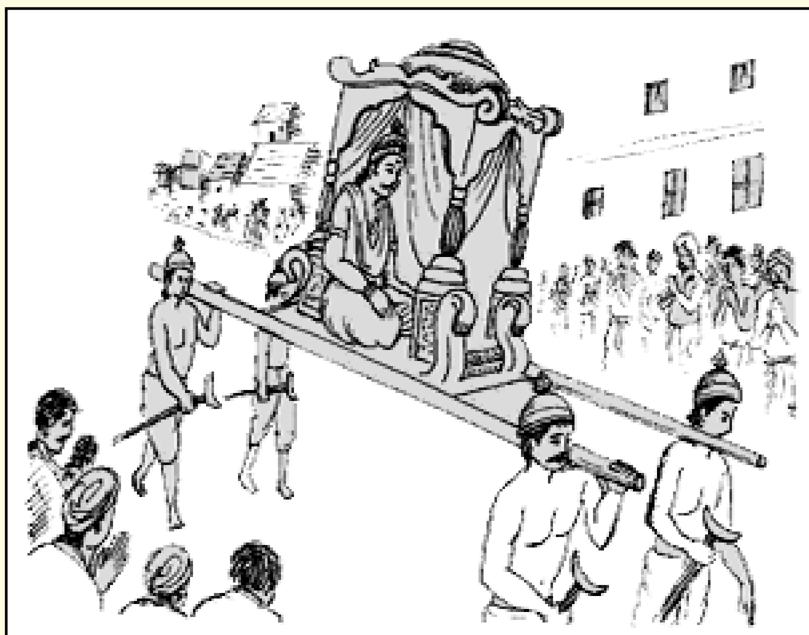
The second story on the above theme, is also told in several ways. After reading these stories, I am sure the readers will respect every profession, equally.

Theme: No one is superior to any other.

Short story 17

The Stone cutter.

There are stone-cutters in almost all parts of the world. They cut stones from rocks – small and big. The builders of houses, temples, palaces and bridges, are their typical customers. As it is today, they have demand for their services, all through the year.



This story is about a Stone-cutter who lived a few centuries ago in Japan. He went every day to a great

rock on the side of a big mountain and cut out slabs for gravestones or for building houses.

He understood very well the kinds of stones wanted for the different purposes, and as he was a careful workman he had plenty of customers. For a long time he was quite happy and contended, and asked for nothing better than what he had.

Now in the mountain dwelt a spirit which now and then appeared to men, and helped them in many ways to become rich and prosperous. The stone-cutter, however, had never seen this spirit, and only shook his head, with an unbelieving air, when anyone spoke of it. But a time was coming when he learned to change his opinion.

One day the stonecutter carried a gravestone to the house of a rich man, and saw there all sorts of beautiful things, of which he had never even dreamt. Suddenly his daily work seemed to grow harder and heavier, and he said to himself: "Oh, if only I were a rich man, and could sleep in a bed with silken curtains and golden tassels, how happy I should be!"

And a voice answered him: "Your wish is heard; a rich man you shall be!"

At the sound of the voice the stonecutter looked around, but could see nobody. He thought it was all his fancy, and picked up his tools and went home, for he did not feel inclined to do any more work that day. But when he reached the little house where he lived, he stood still with amazement, for instead

of his wooden hut was a stately palace filled with splendid furniture, and most splendid of all was the bed, in every respect like the one he had envied.

He was overwhelmed with joy, and in his past life was soon forgotten.

It was now the beginning of summer, and each day the sun blazed more fiercely. One morning the heat was so great that the stonecutter could scarcely breathe, and he determined he would stop at home till the evening. He was rather dull, for he had never learned how to amuse himself, and was peeping through the closed blinds to see what was going on in the street, when a little carriage passed by, drawn by servants dressed in blue and silver.

In the carriage sat a prince, and over his head a golden umbrella was held, to protect him from the sun's rays.

"Oh, if I were only a prince!" said the stonecutter to himself, as the carriage vanished around the corner. "Oh, if I were only a prince, and could go in such a carriage and have a golden umbrella held over me, how happy I should be!"

And a prince he was. Before his carriage rode one company of men and another behind it; servants dressed in scarlet and gold bore him along, the coveted umbrella was held over his head, everything his heart could desire was his. But yet it was not enough. He looked around still for something to wish for, and when he saw that in spite of the water he poured on the grass the rays of the sun scorched it, and that in spite of the umbrella held over his head each day his face grew browner and browner, he cried in his anger: "The sun is mightier than I; oh, if I were only the sun!"

And the mountain spirit answered: "Your wish is heard; the sun you shall be."

And the sun he was, and felt himself proud in his power. He shot his beams above and below, on earth and in heaven; he burnt up the grass in the fields and scorched the faces of princes as well as of poorer folk. but in a short time he began to grow tired of his might, for there seemed nothing left for him to do. Discontent once more filled his soul, and when a cloud covered his face, and hid the earth from him, he cried in his anger: "Does the cloud hold captive my rays, and is it mightier than I? Oh, that I were a cloud, and mightier than any!"

And the mountain spirit answered: "Your wish is heard; a cloud you shall be!"

And a cloud he was, and lay between the sun and the earth. He caught the sun's beams and held them, and to his joy the earth grew green again and flowers blossomed. But that was not enough

for him, and for days and week he poured forth rain till the rivers overflowed their banks, and the crops of rice stood in water. Towns and villages were destroyed by the power of the rain, only the great rock on the mountainside remained unmoved.

The cloud was amazed at the sight, and cried in wonder: "Is the rock, then, mightier than I? Oh, if I were only the rock!"

And the mountain spirit answered; "Your wish is heard; the rock you shall be!"

And the rock he was, and gloried in his power. Proudly he stood, and neither the heat of the sun nor the force of the rain could move him. "This is better than all!" he said to himself. But one day he heard a strange noise at his feet, and when he looked down to see what it could be, he saw a stonecutter driving

chisel into his surface.

Even while he looked, a trembling feeling ran all through him, and a great block broke off and fell upon the ground. Then he cried in his wrath: “Is a mere child of earth mightier than a rock? Oh, if I were only a man!”

And the mountain spirit answered: “Your wish is heard. A man once more you shall be!”

And a man he was, and in the sweat of his brow he toiled again at his trade of stone cutting. His bed was hard and his food scanty, but he had learned to be satisfied with it, and did not long to be something or somebody else. And as he never asked for things he did not have, or desired to be greater and mightier than other people, he was happy at last, and never again heard the voice of the mountain spirit.

Theme: Live today. Now.

Know this:

(1) Yesterday is gone. You cannot change events of yesterday. Decisions made and actions taken will remain so for ever. So forget it.

(2) We have no clue about what is in store for tomorrow. Do not worry about it.

(3) Today, is definitely in our hands. Act with a positive mind set so that life will be enjoyable today and for ever.

(4) Many accumulate wealth for tomorrow by living poor today.

(5)Many waste their time in discussing and dwelling in yesterday's pain or glory.

(6) Not many live in the present. Most of us live either into the past or a distant future.

(7) There by, they miss their best in their lives.

(8) In any adverse situations in our life time, there is some thing to be happy about, all the time.

(9)There is something good in every one's life, all the time.

(10) It is a matter of attitude to identify and enjoy it ! Search and reach it.

Life, for every one, is a mixer of good and bad, pleasure and pain, favorable and adverse. Trained minds wear a positive attitude always. Such individuals can search around, look for and pick every pleasurable events, acts and moments and remain happy.

Untrained minds spot both good and bad and live

through both.

Ill-trained minds nurture negative attitude towards every perceivable and always search around, look for and pick every painful events, acts and moments and remain unhappy always.

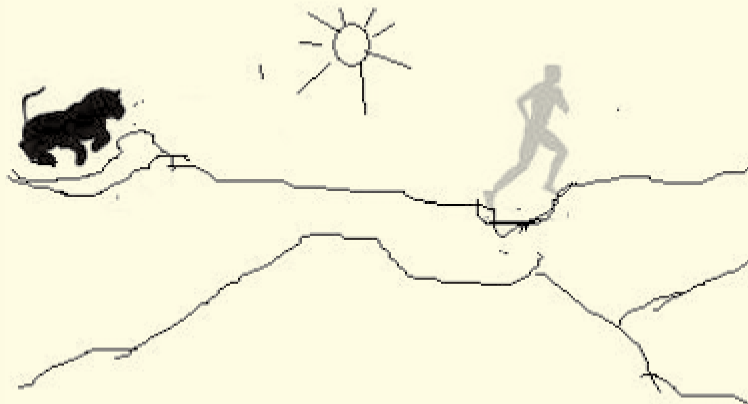
Here goes a story that highlights this theme.

Theme: Live today. Now.

Short Story 18

The traveler on the mountain

This is a story of a traveler. He was walking alone on a mountain to reach his home on the other side of the mountain.



The mountain had a thick forest on it and several wild animals lived in it. Suddenly the traveler spotted a tiger at a distance. He was sure it would devour him. He started running, to save his life.

He has now reached the end of a cliff. He realized

that the death followed him in the form of a hungry tiger.

In order to escape the jaws of the tiger, the man climbed a tree that had grown on the end of the cliff. He moved on the tree, as far away as possible.

Soon the tiger had reached the tree and moved on the branch to reach him.

He discovered to his dismay that the branch was too slender to carry his weight for long. The approaching tiger would make the tree branch break sooner and

faster. Thus the death was approaching the traveler in its second form.

Tiger continued to follow him on to the tree. This signalled the fact that the death is approaching this man faster.

He moved towards the end of the tree branch. The death followed him this time in the form of a fall into the river from a great height.

He thought, in the event the branch breaks, he would fall into the river and flow with it and escape to safety. He then noticed the hungry crocodiles in the river eagerly awaiting his fall. He found that the death is chasing him in the form of crocodiles too.

The death was lurking in his mind. That is the thought that he would fall to certain death as he cannot hold on to the branch for long as the fatigue on his arm would take him to feed the crocs. He is sure of his death is approaching him in many forms and not sure which would cause that and how soon.

That’s when he noticed that a honey comb right above his head and drops of honey dripping from it.. Clutching the branch with one hand, he adjusted

his body in such a way that the drops of honey would fall right into his mouth.

He never enjoyed the taste of fresh mountain honey any time in the past.

There is always something that can make you joyous irrespective of nasty and painful situations that surround you.

Identify the best of things around you and enjoy it. It is a matter of attitude.

Theme: Mindless Compassions

Know this:

(1) Compassion is a great Spiritual vehicle.

(2) Self-pity is not to be thought of as compassion.

(3) Compassion of people devoid of knowledge can be dangerous.

There are several saints know for their Compassion as their vehicle in their spiritual journey. Ramalinga Vallalar is one to quote.

Compassion is good, but our action based on compassion should not be misplaced.

Because, as the proverb goes "Way to hell is paved with good intentions !", we often endanger other's situation with very good intentions.

Freedom and flight would only come after the struggle. Struggle is a gift of nature to every specie to make them strong.

The struggle gives us the strength to face the odds in life and wisdom to act.

If we were to go through our initial part of the life without any obstacles and struggles to achieve we would be crippled.

"The way to hell is paved with good intentions", is an old adage. Mindless compassion is an example.

Theme: Mindless Compassions

Story 19

Compassion that killed

We all know the butterfly, finally, come into the world breaking open the cocoon in which it grew.

So also there are a few species that build around a cocoon at the early stage of its life, grow into it and finally breaks open the cocoon to enter the world.



This is a story of a moth that was killed by compassion. Can compassion kill? Yes; Read the story below:

A science student, found one such cocoon and wanted to watch as the butterfly come out of its

cocoon. As he watched, a small opening appeared

on the cocoon. He skipped his classes and sat down watching for the butterfly to finally come out of the cocoon. He spent several hours, watching it.

A small hole appeared on the cocoon and the creature, say a moth, struggled to force the body through that little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther. It just seemed to be stuck.

Then the man, in his kindness, decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon.

The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shrivelled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. It did not happen! In fact, the little butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shrivelled body and shrivelled wings.

It never was able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening was the way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Freedom and flight would only come after the struggle.

Theme: COMPASSION.

Know this:

(1) Most of us love ourselves.

(2) Some of us love our parents, wife, children and a few other relatives and friends too.

(3) A few among us goes beyond this circle of relatives and friends to love and care to the people in the society where he lives in.

(4) Lord Buddha, Lord Jesus and Prophet Muhammad, Ramalinga adigalaar, are a few, who had compassion extending to the entire humanity.

(5) Compassion of some of the Saints surpassed the limits of humanity to include every life forms such as animals and plants.

(6) Compassion is not an act. instead a means of acting with kindness to people.

(7) Compassion is not a rationale act, for you do not think of pros and cons of the actions you take. It is a subconscious function, performed instantly.

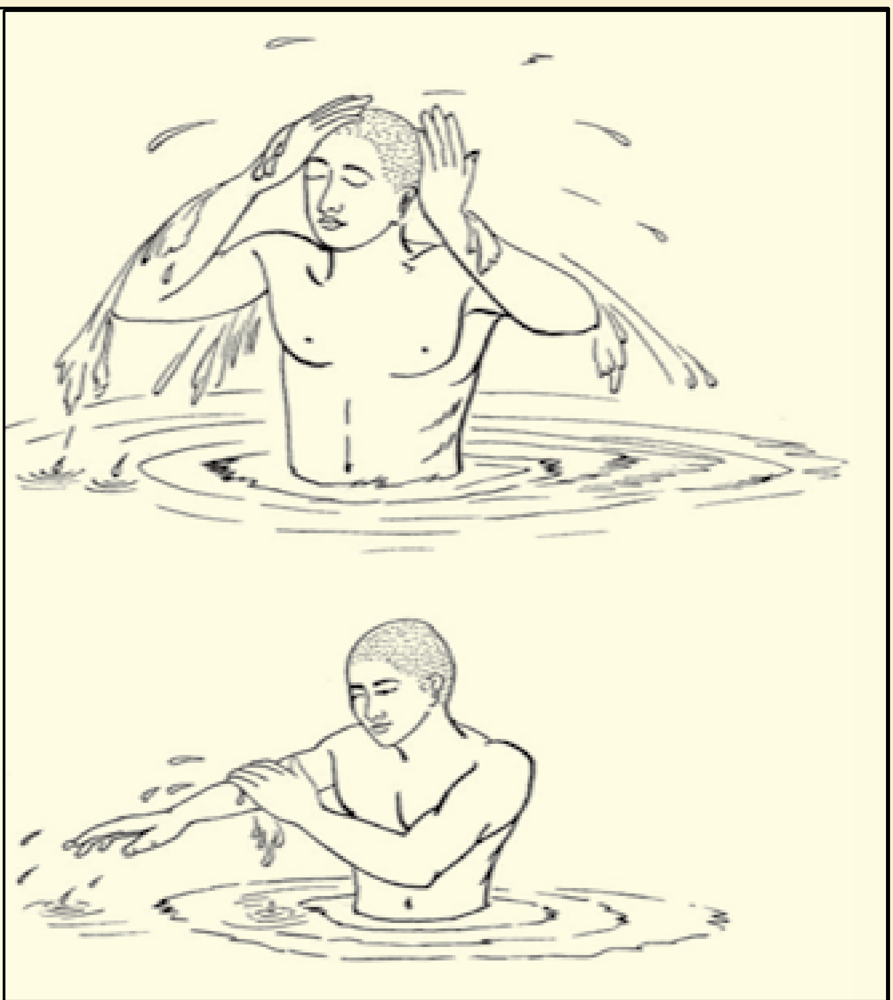
Let us read a Zen story of a Buddhist Monk and his true nature.

Theme: COMPASSION.

Short Story 20.

The monk and the scorpion.

Buddhist monks are known to be of two types. Monks of first type are stationary monks who remain in monasteries performing the religious duties. The second type of monks are known as the wandering



monks. They carry with them a bowl, some food and minimal clothing and move from one monastery to another, meeting various Gurus and learning.

People all over were glad to share their food with strangers who travel.

Two monks were traveling to a distant monastery on

foot.

They stopped by a river for bathing.

As they were bathing one of them noticed a scorpion falling from the branch of a tree over-hanging the river. The scorpion was struggling hard to float and was drowning.

The monk immediately scooped it up with his hand and set it upon the bank.

In the process he was stung. He had acute pain for some time. When he felt slightly better went back to the river and continued bathing and washing his bowl. The second monk was watching this.

The first monk noticed that another scorpion fell in the river. The monk rushed-in to save the second scorpion and was again stung.

The second monk , asked the first as why ventured save the second scorpion when he had a bad experience before?

Because," the monk replied, "saving is my nature and stinging is scorpion's nature"

There may be many among us who feel one should not get nearer to Scorpion at all as we all know it would sting.

After the first bad experience a second attempt to save the scorpion may be decried as foolish.

Some may suggest that the Monk could have used safer method – such as the bowl that was available with him, than get strung.

The explanation could run like this:

This action of the monk is not driven by conscious

thinking. It is a sub-conscious act.

Over a period of time some of our actions by-pass the analysis and action take place upon sensing an event.

We call this “ it is his nature do so”.

Any other person with compassion would do what the first monk did.

Theme: Greed see no end.

Know this:

(1) Many believe, greed cannot be eliminated from human mind.

(2) Greed is a prime force for the humanity to move. May be true. But, what is its impact in our lives, as individuals. Disaster.

(3) Is there any evidence that greed brings good life to individuals?

Theme: Greed see no end.

Story 21

Endless desires.

A simple and good natured fisherman lived in a small hut on the sea shore. There were a few other families who lived by fishing.

While the male members go out on high sea with their boats and fishing net, the women take the fishes to the rich and poor.

While the fisherman was very hard working, content and happy, his wife was not. She always dreamt of living in a house built with brick and mortar.

After a few years of routine life, one fine evening

The fishing net was too heavy to pull..

Initially fisherman thought that he got a big catch – a large fish. When he drew the net near he found that it wasn't a fish. Instead, it was a large flounder.



The flounder spoke. It told the fisherman that he was no fish. He was in fact a prince cursed by a holy man who was once his Spiritual Guru. Very soon the holy man would turn me back into a prince. It begged the fisherman to spare his life and for that act, the flounder promised that it would be grateful for ever.

The fisherman took pity and allowed the fish to swim back into the sea.

When the husband had finished with the story on flounder, his wife became too angry. He called him a stupid and that he had missed a golden opportunity.

On a second thought, he was wondering if he had done something wrong. His conscience did not permit him to seek any favor for some good deed.

His nagging wife convinced him stating seeking a

small favor in return for as much as sparing ones life in no compensation at all. Unable to withstand his wife's bickering and nagging.

He promised his wife that he would seek the flounder's favor and get her a house built of bricks.

His wife was happy.

The next day, the fisherman called out the flounder and it readily came to the shore. With great hesitation he expressed his wife desire and the flounder replied saying that the wish is granted.

When he returned to his place he found no hut. Instead a big brick house was standing in its place. His wife was happily singing and enjoying her stay in her new house.

Her happiness did not lost long.

Soon, he started comparing houses and people where she sold the fish. Now she wanted a life better than a fisher woman. She started pestering her husband asking him to return to the flounder and ask for a life of a big merchant in the town. The husband initially refused to oblige his wife. After several arguments and fight finally yielded to his wife's desire. This time too the flounder obliged.

This way, the desire of the fisher woman did not stop anywhere.

She became a minister, then a queen of the small province in which they were living. Then a queen ruling the entire country. She understood that she would never be content. Her desires grew faster.

One day she asked her husband to talk to flounder and ask as to how the flounder got its magical powers.

Her husband was annoyed as before.

Suggesting his wife that it would be the last time that he would be seeking flounder's favor and if she ever pester her, then he would abandon her

and leave the place.

The flounder told that it was god who gave the magical powers. It also told the fisherman that his wife is too greedy. Now she would ask you to ask me to make her a god herself. I warn you in advance that if she thought so, she would return to her small hut which she originally occupied. The flounder also told the fisherman that his punishment period is over and he will not be appearing before him from then on.

The fisherman thanked the flounder and left.

When he returned home, he started telling her whatever transpired between him and the flounder.

But before he could complete his narration, she thought that she would start fighting with her husband to ask one last favor from the flounder, that is, to make her a god. No sooner she thought that, she found herself back into her shabby hut.

The fisherman never returned to his old hut where his wife lived.

Theme: Greed see no end.

Short Story 22

Greedy Sufi.

Here we read, a Sufi story, on greed.

Barring a few, most people in the spiritual path has a Guru or mentor. Also not all the people in spiritual path enter the forest and do meditation or any other spiritual sadhana.



There were many householders among saints who performed their duty as a house holder and pursuing a spiritual path. None of them could be identified during their life time. There could be industrial workers, bus drivers, shop keepers and so on.

In this story a fisherman set himself on his spiritual journey. He had his mentor in a far away place.

This fisherman had a few disciples too who also lived by fishing. All these fishermen live in hamlet.

Many fellow fishermen did not know that these

small group of men are any different from them. But, all that they might think of them are these people are humane, helpful and charitable.

The elderly fisherman one day turned to one of his disciples and asked him to visit his Guru in his abode in the far away town. He asked him to meet him and convey him his concern that he did not make any significant progress in the spiritual path for quite some time. He sought his advice.

This man had unique characteristic. He goes into the deep sea along with fellow fishermen every day. He keeps one fish and distribute the remaining catches among fellow men who are poor among them. He does not sell them for money or any other material in exchange.

His disciple set on a journey to meet the mentor.

Finally located his abode. He had his first shock to find a great saint which his guru described lived in a palatial house. After verifying several times he entered the house and conveyed his desire to meet his Guru's mentor. Before he arrived at the hall he was ushered in, he watched with dismay the opulence of the building. The pillars had expensive diamonds embedded in them. He though, even an emperor of that country would envy the mentor for his riches.

While his thoughts were engaged in the assessment of the wealth of the Sufi saint, the mentor entered the hall. The visitor introduced himself and explained his mission.

The saint, thought for a while. He replied in one line and walked away from him and vanished. His remark

was small and crisp. He said that it was the greed of his student that impedes his growth. The disciple was unable to accept the observations of the saint and dumbfound.

He returned to his land as fast as he could. When he met is mentor, he did not dare to tell what his mentor wanted him to convey.

He then described his guru the opulence of the place where his mentor lived, the expensive attire he wore and the luxurious life he led. He concluded

that he could not believe that he met Sufi saint in the first place.

He replied that he knew all that. He was only keen to know what he said and not how he looked or how he lived.

The disciple still hesitant to tell what he was asked to convey. The Guru grew impatient. He ordered his disciple to tell only what his mentor conveyed.

The disciple began saying that there is no other soul who ate only one fish in the entire day and gave out the remaining in charity. But, his mentor was uncharitable in making a remark of him saying that you are greedy. He demanded to know from his guru how do one accept a remark by a person who lead a life of an emperor, about a simple person who worked hard all the day, kept only one fish for himself and distributed the rest in charity as greedy?

The guru jumped in joy!

He asserted that his mentor was right in his observation. He explained to his disciple that he was indeed a greedy person. While I lead an austere life and charitable, my thought were not as much, he

reasoned.

While he ate only one fish, some times, he said he felt hungry after eating one fish. In those occasions, he said, he used to think that he should have kept two fishes instead of one. Is that thought not reflect greed?

He observed that it is easy to live an austere life while living among poor or in seclusion. Even though my mentor lives in a luxurious environment, he lives a life free of greed, jealousy and anger. That is really a difficult task.

It is more to do with the mind and less to do with the matter. In our normal life, this extent of greed is tolerable. But, in the spiritual life, it is a great obstacle.

The students of the greedy fisherman understood the underlying concepts. Did you?

Theme: Our Real Problems:

Often our problems are just that someone else is seemingly happy and prosperous. We make wrong comparisons among ourselves. Life is a package deal. Let us see, what these mean through a simple story.

Theme: Our real problem

Short Story 23:

Revolt against the god.

That was a time when Gods frequented earth to know how then people who were created by them lived. When they find the need they did interfere in their affairs and set things right.

In the by gone era, the gods should have felt obliged their devotees whoever they meditated on them. Some devotees undertook severe penance in order to meet the god. While many sought special material favours some wanted merely their grace.

When the god finally appears before them, invariably they give three boons. That is, three wishes of the devotee will be fulfilled.

The god decided to visit a particular village where the people were revolting against god. At that point in time, every one of the villagers believed that the God is doing good to everyone except them.

Gods in the celestial world examined the life of each and every one of the villagers and found nothing wrong in their plan for them.

Then one of the gods decided to descend on the planet and meet the villagers and clarify their doubts.





Every one had the same problem. They felt that their neighbor, their relatives, colleagues were better-off than them. No one was ever happy.

The god realized what the problem was. They also knew that when people had agitated minds, explanations won't work.

So the God got down to the job right earnestly like an expert Management consultant.

The process followed, was as follows.



By dawn, on the following day, they need to write what were all good about their lives and what were not. They need to write a number allotted to them, on the envelope and leave it in the government elementary school. The school declared a holiday so every children were joyous.

The day next every one can examine every cover for its content. Note down the best according to their understanding and retire for the day.

The Third day, when they raise from their bed, they will have a life what they thought the best.

On the third day, every one got up as what they were some three days ago.

The god who came to earth returned immediately after making this announcement. He was pretty sure that the problem was solved for ever.

He explained his fellow gods as follows:

(1) Everyone looks at other's pleasures and compare with their problems or pains.

(2) The day when some one compares their pleasure and pains with others pleasure and pains, they discover that their package is better than others.

The simple logic is, they are already familiar and used to their problems. So their problem looks acceptable or liveable than other's.

When once they know others are no better than their own situation, people become content and happy.

These villagers understood this secret and do not curse the gods, any more.

EPILOGUE

Dear readers,

I came across people who believed that living with good principle always. is impossible.

Some others say, living by such value systems invite only problems.

Greed, jealousy are, mere reflection of ingnorance. They bring upon endless misery to us.

Acquiring knowledge, is the only way to mitigate our miseries. Wiser among us do not wait to learn from their experiences alone. Our life span is inadequate to learn all that during happy living.

Reading books, observing the environment where we live and listening to the wisdom of men of knowledge - Gyani - leads to acquiring other's experience, along side your own.

These helps to quicken the pace of learning and help leading a better life sooner.

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http://science-of-good-living.blogspot.com/



